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On the Cover: Ryan Swope leaps for the catch.
Photo by Jason McConnell '01



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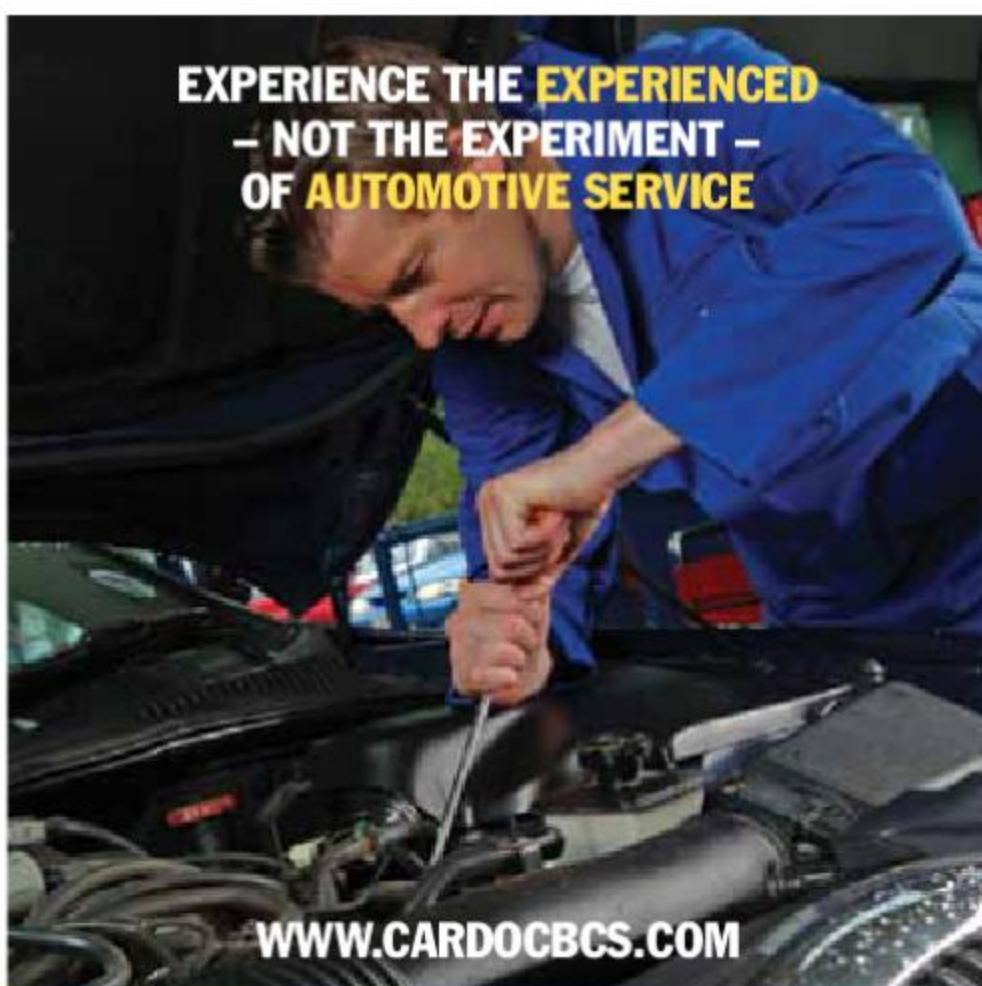
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Howdy!

Although I have been listed as a contributor to *Aggieland Illustrated* for years, somehow my verbal input has never been formulated into text. My current opportunity to contribute comes as a reward for my genius prognostication in the recent AI bowl pick'em contest. It is tradition that the loser gets to write this column, but this year that honor was bestowed on the winner of the contest, so here I am.

I promised our editor that I would not babble on about my fear of the Ol' Sarge character, or those funny overalls with random slogans painted on them that students wear to games, or how I wish my bench seat on the student side at Kyle field was wider. Those trivial issues will be put aside to focus this brief commentary on an optimistic, exciting outlook for all Aggie fans.

Just as the shirtless, portly guy who danced courtside at the basketball games has moved on, so have the Aggies. A new conference, new football coach and new stadiums (actually renovations at the football and baseball fields) seem to commence a new era in Texas A&M athletics. New opportunities always bring new challenges and I, for one, am extremely excited about the upcoming year and looking forward to seeing new teams, new fans and new exposure to our great cities and university. Heck, trading road trips from Waco, Stillwater and Lubbock to Tuscaloosa, Gainesville and Baton Rouge is not all that bad.

Let those t-sips have their network, and those Bears have, well nothing really. Goodbye Sooners, Wildcats, Cyclones and hello Bulldogs, Gamecocks, and Razorbacks. Just like in 1994 when I replaced my Southwest Conference mascot poster (that horned frog always freaked me out) with a Big 12 poster, I embrace the SEC. As for those who think we will not be competitive, I say that greatness only makes you better and true Aggie fans will continue to be supportive and faithful through any transition like they always have been. I might even buy myself an Ol' Sarge T-shirt.

Gentry "Scoop" Woodard



Scoop's previous appearance in AI was secretly as the Dude Perfect Panda.

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Aggieland

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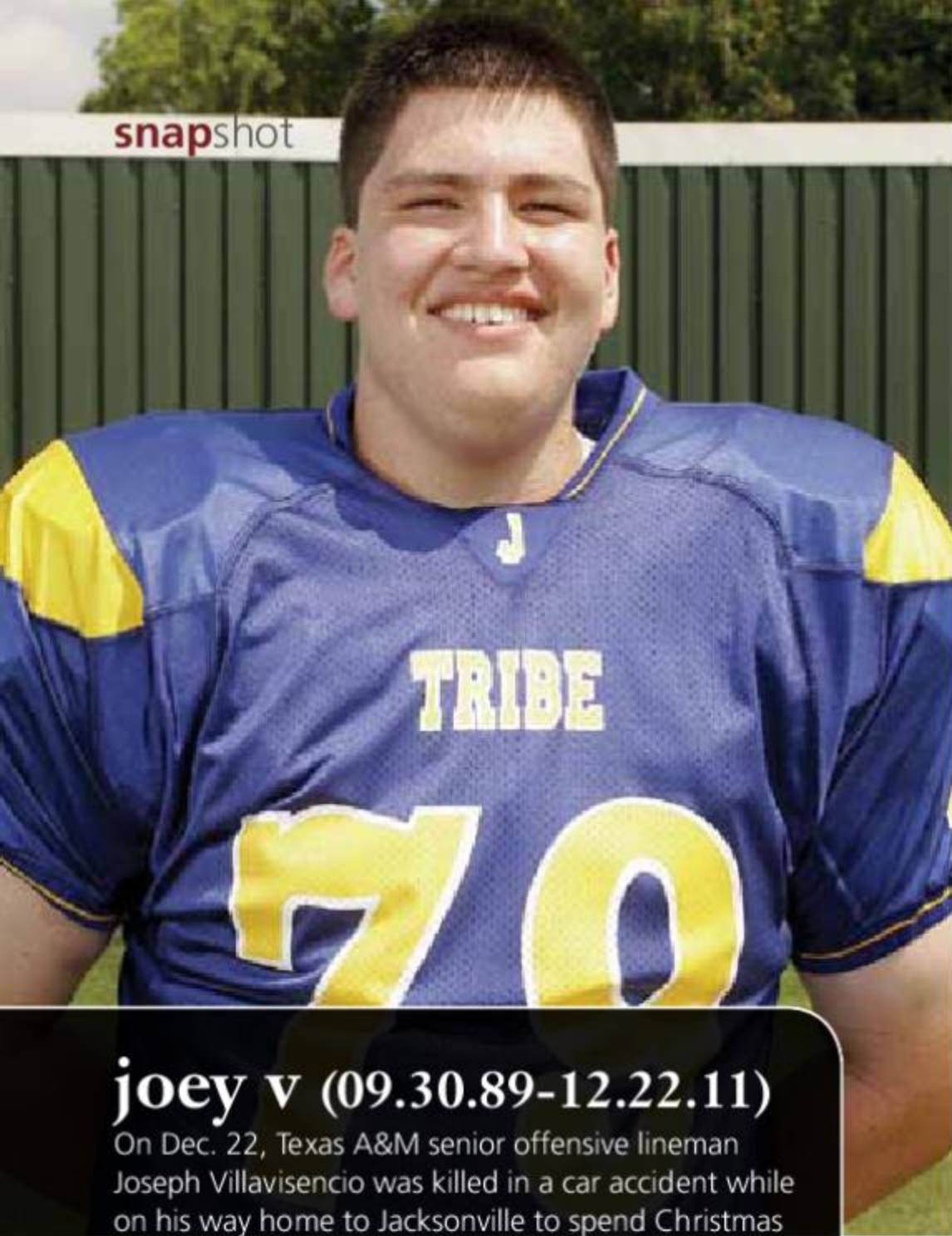
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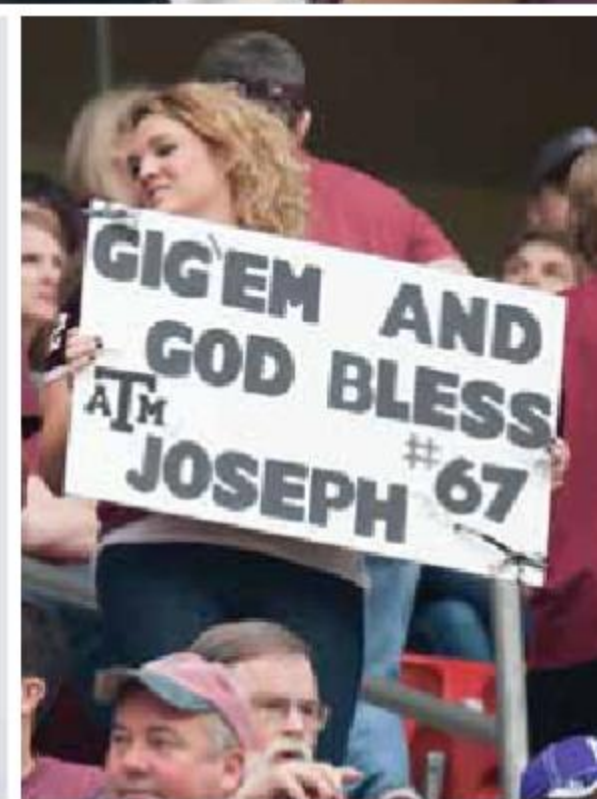
snapshot



joey v (09.30.89-12.22.11)

On Dec. 22, Texas A&M senior offensive lineman Joseph Villavisencio was killed in a car accident while on his way home to Jacksonville to spend Christmas with his family. A radiological health engineering major, "Joey V." was known as an excellent student and teammate who would do anything for anyone, always offering a smile. Photos by Sports Photos USA, Glen Johnson and Jason McConnell '01.





Joseph Villavisencio
1989 - 2011



snapshot





grand finale

Jeff Fuller snags a 26-yard touchdown pass from fellow senior Ryan Tannehill in the second quarter of the Meineke Car Care Bowl of Texas. Arguably the best receiver to ever wear maroon and white, Fuller capped a frustrating season and a record-setting career with seven catches for 119 yards in Texas A&M's bowl victory. Photo series by Jason McConnell '01.



snapshot

rookie of the year

Von Miller, the No. 2 overall pick in the draft, won the 2011 NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year award. Following an All-American career at Texas A&M, Miller sparked a defensive turnaround in Denver, recording 64 tackles and 11.5 sacks despite missing one game and playing the last four contests with a cast protecting his surgically repaired right thumb. Miller was also named a second-team All-Pro and started for the AFC in the 2012 Pro Bowl. Photos by the Associated Press and Getty Images.



TREY WILLIAMS
Running Back

Grading the Class of 2012

BY JEREMY KSIONDA '04

On February 1, Kevin Sumlin and the new Aggie coaching staff announced a top 15 signing class. With a little less than a month to re-recruit the commitments he inherited, weed out some of the ones who weren't going to qualify academically and hone in on some of his own targets, most consider Coach Sumlin's first class a success.

Offensively, the Aggies pulled in the top ranked quarterback and top ranked wide receiver in the state in **Matt Davis** (Klein Forest) and **Thomas Johnson** (Dallas Skyline), as well as running back **Trey Williams** (Spring Dekaney), who was mostly regarded as 1A and 1B with Longhorn signee Jonathan Gray (Aledo). For as long as we've been following recruiting, we can't recall another class where Texas A&M managed to pull the "Big 3" trifecta at the offensive skill positions.

In the trenches, the Aggies added the nation's number one rated center prospect,

Mike Matthews (Fort Bend Elkins).

While the offense has the "star power," the bulk of the class actually comes on the defensive side of the ball. Ten of the Aggies' nineteen commitments are defenders, with Carthage swingman and Army All-American **Edward Pope** likely to get looks on both sides of the ball. In January, Sumlin managed to poach a couple of defenders from the Oklahoma Sooners commitment list – defensive lineman **Polo Manukainiu** (Eules Trinity) and defensive back **De'Vante Harris** (West Mesquite), an Under Armour All-American rated as the nation's third best corner prospect. The Aggies also picked up a signing day surprise in defensive tackle **Edmund Ray** (Ritenour HS; St. Louis, MO), who faxed his letter of intent to A&M instead of Missouri as widely expected.

Although it typically takes anywhere from three to four years to truly measure

the success of a recruiting class, we consider this class to be very solid, and would grade it as a "B" overall. While you always want more, the Aggies were able to address most of their needs at each position:

QB (A)

With three quarterbacks on campus, the Aggies needed just one in this class. **Matt Davis** was the Offensive MVP of the Gridiron Kings 7-on-7 championship in Orlando last summer. The top ranked quarterback in Texas and third ranked dual threat quarterback in the nation, Davis is big catch for the Aggies. He was also one of the biggest recruiters for the class after he verbally committed.

RB (A)

When you sign the most prolific senior running back the state of Texas has ever produced, you don't get any lower than an "A" rating in our book. An Army All-American, **Trey Williams** should log significant playing time in 2012. The Aggies could have used one more back in this class, but the addition of 5-star running back **Brandon Williams** – a transfer from Oklahoma at midterm – lessened the need.

WR (A+)

Simply put, **Thomas Johnson** is the highest rated high school receiver prospect to ever sign with A&M. Signing him out of the talent rich Dallas Skyline HS system was a huge, huge coup for Sumlin and the Aggie staff. **Sabian Holmes** out of Southlake Carroll was a Baylor pledge that switched to A&M with the coaching change. He's a proven winner with speed to burn. Juco wideout **Derel Walker** was brought in at midterm because of a lack of proven play-makers on the roster. **Edward Pope** was a first-team All-State pick on offense and a third-team selection on defense in 2011, so he could end up at receiver or in the secondary next season.

OL (B)

With Jake Matthews and Luke Joeckel heading into their junior campaigns, the Aggies probably could have used another tackle prospect or two in this class. Still, **Mike Matthews** comes from the famous Matthews lineage, and anytime you sign a prospect that most already consider an NFL player, you've done pretty well. **Germain Ifedi**, a giant of a prospect with long arms, good feet and tremendous strength could potentially play guard or tackle, while **Kimo Tipoti** is an interior prospect all the way. **Julien Obioha** was an athletic defensive end in high school who projects as an offensive lineman at A&M.

DL (C)

It probably isn't fair to grade this position out as a C based upon the potential of some of these prospects, but the Aggies needed an instant impact defender or two along the defensive line heading into the SEC next season and it doesn't appear as though they were able to pull that off. Still, stealing **Edmund Ray** from Mizzou was a tremendous coup, and plenty of teams were after **Michael Richardson** and **Alonzo Williams** well into January before both prospects shut down the recruiting process. **Tyrone Taylor**, brother of current Aggie Tyrell, has a quick burst off the edge, but will need to gain weight before he is ready to play defensive end at the next level.

LB (C)

Make no mistake: four star linebacker **Jordan Richmond** out of Denton Ryan is as good a linebacker prospect as the Aggies have signed this decade. He's long, he's agile, and he's physically built to fit the mold of an SEC linebacker. Given the Aggies depth chart, however, they really could have used two more just like him. Denzell Devall (Alabama) and Dalton Santos (Texas) were attainable but managed to slip away.

DB (B+)

While many of the internet recruiting experts are dwelling on the last minute defections of Darion Monroe (Tulane) and Corey Thompson (LSU), new defensive backs coach and co-defensive coordinator Marcel Yates has to be celebrating over the January addition of cornerback **De'Vante Harris**, the defensive MVP of the Gridiron Kings 7-on-7 championship. The Aggies also picked up an instant impact player in Juco cornerback **Tremaine "Otis" Jacobs**. Safety **Kenneth Marshall** is our pick as the sleeper prospect in this class. **MI**

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The defending national champion Aggies are battling Oklahoma for 2nd place in the Big 12 while No. 1 Baylor has essentially claimed the top spot. Texas A&M has one of the most balanced scoring teams in the Big 12 with four players averaging double figures (junior Kelsey Bone and seniors Sydney Carter, Adaora Elonu and Tyra White). Following their last Big 12 tournament, the 14th-ranked Aggies will host the first and second rounds of the NCAA Women's Basketball Championship at Reed Arena on their quest for Denver – the location of the 2012 Final Four.

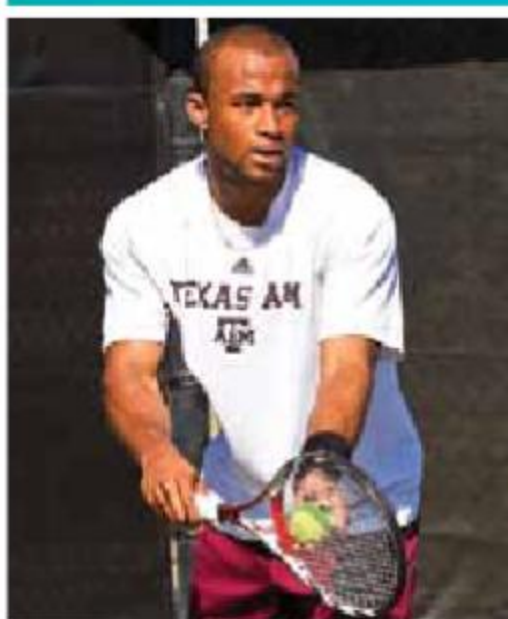


PAY HEED, ALL WHO ENTER
BEWARE OF "THE PHOG"



(men's basketball) The road for first-year head coach Billy Kennedy has been anything but easy this season. The Aggies have showed a lot of heart and toughness, but have been unable to overcome key injuries and a mid-season transfer. Barring a conference tournament championship run, the program will miss the NCAA Tournament for the first time since Billy Gillispie's first season in 2005. **(baseball)** Led by reigning conference player of the year Tyler Naquin, who led the nation in hits last season, as well as fellow All-Americans Ross Stripling and Michael Wacha, the two-time defending Big 12 champions begin their quest for a return trip to Omaha in the recently transformed Olsen Field at Blue Bell Park. Fresh off the program's first College World Series appearance since 1999, the Aggies are ranked as high as 5th nationally in preseason polls. **(swimming)** The 6th-ranked women and No. 18 men compete in their final Big 12 Championships in February. **(tennis)** The 11th-ranked men have started strong including a victory over No. 14 Texas, while the No. 30 women under first-year head coach Howard Joffe, are 2-1 with a win over future conference foe LSU. **(track & field)** The No. 9 men and 11th-ranked women are set to compete in their final Big 12 Indoor Championships in February. **(softball)** The 15th-ranked Aggies began their season by winning three of five games in the Kaji-kawa Classic in Tempe, Ariz. Coach Jo Evans returned eight starters from last year's 44-15 squad led by junior All-Americans Meagan May and Mel Dumezich.





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— HEAD COACH KEVIN SUMLIN

THE NEW REGIME

Meet the assistant coaches who will help lead Texas A&M into the SEC BY BRIAN DAVIS '01

The process is nearly complete, as new Aggie head coach Kevin Sumlin is close to assembling the coaching staff that will lead Texas A&M into the Southeastern Conference next season.

Glancing at each of Sumlin's assistants, it is easy to see the most common theme among them – recruiting, recruiting and recruiting. In addition to bringing a track record as excellent recruiters, each coach has extensive connections in key regions across Texas and the U.S. A majority of the assistants have served as recruiting coordinators at previous stops.

With an average age under 40, there is a lot of youth on the new Aggie staff. That may lead to some growing pains early on, but it should also increase the energy level on and off the field.

While having a great staff of recruiters is a good starting point, you can't just recruit talented players and expect them to become

elite college football players on their own. Your coaching staff has to know how to coach, as well.

"I was looking for guys who could recruit, wanted to recruit, will recruit, evaluate and coach, and the pool of those guys is not very good," Sumlin admitted. "There are a lot of coaches out there who only want to coach and want nothing to do with recruiting. And there are a lot of guys who are strong recruiters who are, quite frankly, average coaches. I feel really good about the group that we have assembled."

A national coach of the year finalist in two of his four seasons at the University of Houston, Sumlin brought three assistants from his Cougar offensive staff. All three played high school football in Texas and have extensive ties across the state.

While Sumlin will likely provide plenty of input, leading the Aggie offense will be former Cougar assistant **Kliff Kingsbury**. Texas A&M football fans need no introduction to the former Texas Tech record-setting quarterback who was a thorn in Aggie sides during his playing days. Whether you loved him or hated him, Kingsbury is now one of the good guys as A&M's offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach.

Regarded as one of the nation's brightest young assistant coaches, Kingsbury served as co-offensive coordinator and QB coach for the Cougars, and was named Offensive Coordinator of the Year by FootballScoop.com. At Houston, Kingsbury tutored record-setting quarterback Case Keenum in his senior season when he led the nation in passing yards, passing touchdowns and total offense. With Kingsbury calling the plays, the Cougars averaged 599.1 total yards per game, including 450.1 through the air, while scoring over 49 points per game.



KLIFF KINGSBURY
Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks

Birthdate: August 9, 1979 (32)
Hometown: New Braunfels, Texas
High School: New Braunfels
College: Texas Tech '01

Coaching Career

2010-11: Houston (Co-Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks)
2008-09: Houston (Offensive Quality Control Assistant)

Bowl Games

2011: Ticket City (Houston)
2009: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)
2008: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)

**CLARENCE MCKINNEY***Running Backs/Recruiting Coordinator***Birthdate:** December 26, 1970 (41)**Hometown:** Houston, Texas**Family:** Wife Jakmica, children Britney, Atallah & Quran**High School:** Houston Yates**College:** University of Mary '94, Prairie View A&M '02**Coaching Career**

2010-11: Houston (Running Backs/Recruiting Coordinator)

2008-09: Houston (Running Backs)

2005-07: Yates HS (Head Coach)

2003-05: North Shore HS (Assistant Coach)

1997-03: Booker T. Washington HS (Assistant Coach)

Bowl Games

2011: Ticket City (Houston)

2009: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)

2008: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)

**B.J. ANDERSON***Offensive Line***Birthdate:** September 3, 1974 (37)**Hometown:** Van, Texas**Family:** Wife Stacey, sons Justus & Gage**High School:** Van**College:** Stephen F. Austin '97**Coaching Career**

2009-11: Houston (Offensive Line)

2005-08: Sam Houston State (Run-Game Coordinator/Offensive Line)

2002-04: Tarleton State (Offensive Line)

1999-01: Texas A&M (Graduate Assistant/Offensive Line)

1998: Stephen F. Austin (Tight Ends)

1997: Stephen F. Austin (Graduate Assistant/Offensive Line)

Bowl Games

2011: Ticket City (Houston)

2009: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)

2001: GalleryFurniture.com (Texas A&M)

2000: Independence (Texas A&M)

1999: Alamo (Texas A&M)

The first test for Kingsbury will be to see how he evolves the air raid offense that he orchestrated in Houston to a scheme that takes advantage of the talent on the current Aggie roster, specifically at running back.

After an eight-year professional football career, Kingsbury entered the coaching ranks in the spring of 2008 when he joined Sumlin's staff as an offensive quality control assistant. A sixth-round draft pick in 2003 by New England, Kingsbury played for five NFL teams and also saw action in the Canadian Football League and the All-American Football League. The first quarterback in Mike Leach's system at Texas Tech, Kingsbury set 39 school records, 16 Big 12 marks and 17 NCAA records during his career while earning multiple honors including Associated Press Big 12 Offensive Player of the Year.

Clarence McKinney will coach the Aggie running backs and serve as the program's recruiting coordinator – the same positions he held at Houston on Sumlin's staff. A former coach at three Houston-area high schools, McKinney is exactly what you want your running backs coach to be – a lights-out recruiter. During his ten years at the high school level, McKinney established impressive ties to the greater Houston area and various head coaches across the state.

At Houston, he coached All-Conference USA running back Charles Sims, who gained 7.5 yards per carry on his way to 821

yards and nine scores in 2011 while also grabbing 51 passes for 575 yards. In 2010, McKinney tutored Bryce Beall to first-team all-conference honors. During his first year at Houston in 2008, McKinney guided Beall to C-USA Freshman of the Year Honors, in addition to him becoming the first freshman in UH history to rush for more than 1,000 yards.

McKinney's first tests will be to get senior Christine Michael back to pre-injury form, while helping true freshman Trey Williams adjust to the college level before the 2012 season begins.

The third assistant to follow Sumlin from Houston is offensive line coach **B.J. Anderson**. The veteran line coach first worked with Sumlin when he was a graduate assistant at Texas A&M from 1999-2001. At Houston, Anderson coached five offensive linemen to All-Conference USA honors while paving the way for a Cougar offense that finished in the top 11 in total offense the past three seasons, and was the nation's most prolific offense in 2009 and 2011.

A native of Van, Texas, Anderson is well known for his recruiting ties to East Texas, an area that was once a pipeline for A&M football before the program's decline at the turn of the century. If he can help rebuild Aggie recruiting efforts in that area, Anderson may end up as one of Sumlin's most important hires.

With the center and two tackle positions likely set, the first test for Anderson will be establishing depth along the offensive line and finding starters at left and right guard.

Overseeing the Aggie wide receivers for Sumlin will be **David Beaty**, who has served as offensive coordinator at Kansas and Rice during his career. Before joining the college ranks, Beaty coached at four Dallas-area high schools and was head coach at Irving MacArthur HS and North Dallas HS. The Garland native is very highly regarded in coaching circles and has strong recruiting ties to the Metroplex – another area that Texas A&M has struggled to recruit recently. If early returns are any indication, Beaty could be the ace recruiter on the new Aggie staff.

While coaching wide receivers at Kansas, Beaty helped Kerry Meier earn All-Big 12 accolades in 2008 and 2009, and Dezmon Briscoe earn All-American and first-team All-Big 12 honors in 2009. Both players finished their careers as the top two in KU history in career receptions and receiving yards. In his first year at Kansas in 2008, Beaty was responsible for one of the nation's top receiving duos in Briscoe and Meier. Both players registered

**DAVID BEATY***Wide Receivers***Birthdate:** October 26, 1970 (41)**Hometown:** Garland, Texas**Family:** Wife Raynee, daughters Averie & Alexa**High School:** Garland**College:** Lindenwood '94**Coaching Career**

2011: Kansas (Co-Offensive Coordinator/Wide Receivers)

2010: Rice (Offensive Coordinator)

2008-09: Kansas (Wide Receivers)

2006-07: Rice (Passing Game Coordinator/Wide Receivers)

2002-05: Irving MacArthur HS (Head Coach/Athletic Coordinator)

2001: North Dallas HS (Head Coach/Athletic Director)

1997-2000: Garland HS (Assistant Coach/Special Teams/WR)

1994-96: Naaman Forest HS (Assistant Coach/WR/QB/DB)

Bowl Games

2008: Insight (Kansas)

2006: New Orleans (Rice)

**BRIAN POLIAN***Special Teams Coordinator/Tight Ends***Birthdate:** December 22, 1974 (37)**Hometown:** The Bronx, New York**Family:** Wife Laura; son Aidan Doyle**High School:** St. Francis (New York)**College:** John Carroll University '97, Baylor '00**Coaching Career**

2011: Stanford (Special Teams/Recruiting Coordinator/Safeties)

2010: Stanford (Special Teams Coordinator/Safeties)

2008-09: Notre Dame (Special Teams Coordinator)

2007: Notre Dame (Inside Linebackers/Special Teams)

2006: Notre Dame (Special Teams/Linebackers Assistant)

2005: Notre Dame (Special Teams/Defensive Backs Assistant)

2004: Central Florida (Running Backs/Recruiting Coordinator)

2001-03: Buffalo (Running Backs/Special Teams Coordinator)

1999-2000: Baylor (Graduate Assistant)

1998: Buffalo (Tight Ends/Assistant Offensive Line)

1997: Michigan State (Graduate Assistant/Tight Ends/Offensive Line)

Bowl Games

2011: Fiesta (Stanford)

2010: Orange (Stanford)

2008: Hawaii (Notre Dame)

2006: Sugar (Notre Dame)

2005: Fiesta (Notre Dame)

1997: Aloha (Michigan State)

more than 90 receptions and 1,000 yards in a record-setting season.

Beaty is a 1994 graduate of Lindenwood (St. Charles, Mo.) College, where he played football and served as a team captain from 1992-93. Beaty was a four-year starter at wide receiver and led the team in receptions for three straight seasons. He played both football and soccer at Garland HS where he graduated in 1989.

Beaty's first test will be determining how the receivers who are already on campus fit into the new Aggie offense and establishing depth at each position.

The final piece of the offensive puzzle is former Stanford assistant **Brian Polian**. Fresh off back-to-back BCS games with the Cardinal, Polian will coach tight ends and the special teams units for Texas A&M. Known for his national recruiting prominence, Polian served as special teams coordinator and safeties coach in two seasons at Stanford, and added the role of recruiting coordinator in 2011. He was named one of the top recruiters in the country by Tom Lemming's/MaxPreps in November 2011 and one of the best in the Pac 10 Conference in February 2011 by ESPN.com.

Before joining the Stanford program, Polian spent five seasons at Notre Dame coaching the special teams units and assisting with the defensive backs and linebackers. A nominee for AFCA Assistant Coach of the Year honors in 2008, Polian helped the Irish to three bowl games, including two BCS bowls. He was named one of the top 20 recruiters in the country and the Big 10/Midwest Recruiter of the Year by Rivals.com, and a Top Three National Recruiter by Tom Lemming. While at Notre Dame, he helped sign five-star linebacker Manti Te'o and quarterbacks Jimmy Clausen and Dayne Crist.

While Sumlin found what he wanted on offense fairly quickly, it took a little longer to fill his defensive staff. Knowing how critical the defensive coordinator hire would be as the Aggies head to the SEC, Sumlin searched far and wide for the right coach.

He nearly lured up-and-comer Pat Narduzzi away from Michigan State, but ultimately the Spartans offered enough money to convince him to stay. Sumlin then turned his attention to veteran defensive coordinator and former Marshall University head coach **Mark Snyder** to run the A&M defense.

One of the most respected defensive minds in college football, Snyder came to College Station after coordinating South Florida's defense for the previous two seasons. In addition to his time at USF, Snyder's impressive resumé includes a five-year stint as head coach at his alma mater, Marshall University, and a stay as defensive coordinator under Jim Tressel at Ohio State and Youngstown State.

A former All-American for the Thundering Herd football team, Snyder compiled a 22-37 record over his five-year tenure with Marshall as the program struggled during the transition from the MAC to Conference USA.

In Snyder's four years at Ohio State, the Buckeyes posted a 40-11 overall record, tallied a 3-1 record in bowl games, and claimed the 2002 national championship.

Snyder helped develop a number of outstanding players at Ohio State, including All-Americans Matt Wilhelm, Cie Grant and A.J. Hawk. Hawk led OSU with 141 tackles en route to becoming the No. 5 overall pick by the Green Bay Packers in the 2006 NFL Draft.

The South Point, Ohio, native played free safety at Marshall and led the Southern Conference with 10 interceptions in 1987, which still stands as a program and Southern Conference single-season record. Along the way, he captured honorable mention All-America honors and helped lead Marshall to the school's first-ever NCAA Div. II championship game.

Snyder faces perhaps the most vital first test among the A&M staff, as he converts the Aggie defense from Tim DeRuyter's 3-4 scheme to the 4-3. While DeRuyter made huge strides in his two seasons on campus, there's no denying that a struggling defense has been a major factor during the program's downfall.

**MARK SNYDER***Defensive Coordinator***Birthdate:** December 30, 1964 (47)**Hometown:** South Point, Ohio**Family:** Wife Beth, children Chelsea, Lindsay & Shaylee**High School:** Ironton (Ohio)**College:** Marshall University '88**Coaching Career**

2010-11: South Florida (Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers)

2005-09: Marshall (Head Coach)

2004: Ohio State (Defensive Coordinator)

2001-03: Ohio State (Linebackers)

1997-2000: Minnesota (Defensive Ends)

1996: Youngstown State (Defensive Coordinator/Secondary)

1994-95: Youngstown State (Inside Linebackers/Special Teams)

1991-93: Youngstown State (Outside Linebackers)

1990: UCF (Linebackers)

1989: UCF (Graduate Assistant)

1988: Marshall (Student Assistant)

Bowl Games

2010: Meineke Car Care (USF)


2004: Alamo (Ohio State)

2003: Fiesta (Ohio State)

2002: Fiesta (Ohio State)

2001: Outback (Ohio State)


1999: Sun (Minnesota)



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He will have plenty of help from former Boise State coach **Marcel Yates**, who will serve as co-defensive coordinator while also overseeing the Aggie defensive secondary.

"Marcel is another terrific recruiter who has a proven record in developing the young men he coaches," Sumlin said.

At Boise State, Yates coached defensive backs for nine seasons, first under Dan Hawkins and later under Chris Peterson. He was a part of eight Bronco squads that posted double-digit victories, including a pair of undefeated teams that won BCS bowl games in 2006 and 2009.

Yates directed the entire secondary for the last six seasons, and added defensive passing game coordinator to his coaching responsibilities in 2011. He coached cornerbacks during his first three seasons with the Broncos. His players called Boise State "DBU" because of their NFL success – safety George Iloka likely will be the sixth defensive back to reach that league in six years.

A native of Los Angeles, Calif., Yates was a standout player at BSU from 1996-99. Lining up at defensive back, Yates finished his career with 138 tackles (89 solo). Following his senior season in 1999, he received the team's Dennis Erickson Valor Award. He helped the Broncos to their first-ever FBS bowl game, a 34-31 win over Louisville in the 1999 Humanitarian Bowl. He earned his bachelor's degree in social science/public affairs in 2000. Yates used his connections in Los Angeles to create a steady talent pipeline to Boise.

In addition to helping coordinate the defense's transformation to the 4-3 scheme, Yates' first major test will be shoring up the Aggie pass defense – one of the team's biggest weaknesses last season. Playing in the more run-oriented SEC will help, but Yates will also be working with a lot of inexperienced players.

Despite being the last to join the new Aggie staff, linebacker coach **Matt Wallerstedt** could be considered one of Sumlin's most impressive coups. Wallerstedt just completed his second season as associate head coach and defensive coordinator at the Air Force Academy, and reportedly had an offer to be the defensive coordinator at Kansas State – his alma mater.

Wallerstedt nearly came to Aggieland when DeRuyter – the Academy's previous defensive coordinator – was hired, but in-



MATT WALLERSTEDT

Linebackers

Birthdate: September 3, 1966 (45)

Hometown: Oscoda, Michigan

Family: Wife Josie, son Cal

High School: Manhattan (Kansas)

College: Kansas State '88, Fort Hays State '95

Coaching Career

2010-11: Air Force (Associate Head Coach/Defensive Coordinator/ILB)

2008-09: Air Force (Assistant Head Coach/ILB)

2007: Kansas State (Special Teams Coordinator)

2006-07: Kansas State (Linebackers)

2006: Kansas State (Recruiting Coordinator)

2004-05: Akron (Associate Head Coach/ILB/Special Teams)

2003: North Alabama (Defensive Coordinator/ILB)

2000-02: Wyoming (Defensive Coordinator/ILB)

1997-99: Wyoming (Defensive Line)

1996: Emporia State (Defensive Backs)

1994-95: Fort Hays State (Defensive Line)

1989-90: Arizona State (Graduate Assistant/Defensive Line)

1988: Kansas State (Student Assistant/Defensive Backs)

Bowl Games

2010: Independence (Air Force)

2009: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Air Force)

2008: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Air Force)

2006: Texas Bowl (Kansas State)

2005: Motor City (Akron)

stead was named DeRuyter's successor. Known for being a very intense coach when he's on the field, Wallerstedt spent four years on the Air Force staff. He was an assistant head coach and tutored the inside linebackers during his first two seasons.

He was instrumental in developing one of the top defenses in Air Force history in 2009. The team led the Mountain West Conference and ranked fifth nationally in pass defense, allowing only 154.3 yards per game. The unit was also second in the conference and 11th in the nation in total defense allowing just 288.3 yards per game. The Air Force defense was second in the MWC and 10th nationally in scoring defense, giving up only 15.7 points per game – the best mark in school history since 1998. The defense also scored five touchdowns that season.

Wallerstedt was hired at Air Force following a stint at Kansas State, where he was a former All-American linebacker. He coached inside linebackers in 2006-07 and served as the Wildcats' recruiting coordinator during the 2006 season and coordinated K-State's special teams units in 2007. He helped the Wildcats to the 2006 Texas Bowl while there.

A 1984 graduate of Manhattan HS, Wallerstedt lettered at Kansas State from 1984-1987 and led the Wildcats in tackles as a junior and senior. In fact, his 165 tackles in 1987 still rank fifth on K-State's single-season tackle chart, while his 338 career stops rank ninth all time in school history. One of K-State's 1987 co-captains and the Wildcats' MVP that season, Wallerstedt earned All-Big Eight honors and was an honorable mention All-American by The Associated Press for 1987.

Wallerstedt earned his bachelor's degree in business management from K-State in 1988 and added a master's degree in athletic administration from Fort Hays State in 1995.

Sumlin retained second-year Texas A&M assistant Terrell Williams to coach the Aggie defensive line, but Williams was suddenly hired away by the Oakland Raiders in February to fill the same role under first-year coach Dennis Allen – a former



MARCEL YATES

Co-Defensive Coordinator/Secondary

Birthdate: September 16, 1977 (34)

Hometown: Los Angeles, California

Family: Wife Melanie

College: Boise State '00

Coaching Career

2011: Boise State (Defensive Pass Game Coordinator/Secondary)

2006-10: Boise State (Secondary)

2003-05: Boise State (Cornerbacks)

2001-02: Montana State (Defensive Assistant)

Bowl Games

2011: Las Vegas (Boise State)

2010: Las Vegas (Boise State)

2009: Fiesta (Boise State)

2008: Poinsettia (Boise State)

2007: Hawaii (Boise State)

2006: Fiesta (Boise State)

2005: MPC Computers (Boise State)

2004: Liberty (Boise State)

2003: Fort Worth (Boise State)



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JUSTIN MOORE

Associate Athletic Director for Football

Birthdate: May 5, 1981 (30)

Hometown: Houston, Texas

Family: Wife Dory, children Kate & Tysen

High School: Katy Taylor

College: Texas A&M '04

Coaching Career

2008-11: Houston (Assistant Athletics Director for Football Operations)

2006-08: Texas A&M (Special Assistant to the Senior Associate AD)

Bowl Games

2011: Ticket City (Houston)

2009: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)

2008: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)



LARRY JACKSON

Strength and Conditioning

Birthdate: October 7, 1971 (40)

Hometown: Rockdale, Texas

Family: Wife Amy, daughters Kate & Abby

High School: Rockdale

College: Texas A&M '95

Coaching Career

2006-11: Houston (Director of Sports Performance)

2004-06: Oklahoma (Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach)

1998-04: Texas A&M (Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach)

Bowl Games

2009: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)

2008: Bell Helicopter Armed Forces (Houston)

2007: Texas (Houston)

2006: Liberty (Houston)

2005: Holiday (Oklahoma)

2004: BCS National Championship Game (Oklahoma)

2001: GalleryFurniture.com (Texas A&M)

2000: Independence (Texas A&M)

1999: Alamo (Texas A&M)

Texas A&M football player. A native of Los Angeles, the opportunity to coach professional football in his home state was too much for Williams to pass up.

The search for his replacement is expected to go quickly with important junior recruiting efforts currently underway. Whoever fills Williams' shoes, the first test will be converting the defensive line from a 3-man front (3-4) to a 4-man front (4-3) and establishing depth at each position.

Sumlin also added a pair of Aggies to his support staff. Former Texas A&M baseball pitcher **Justin Moore** will serve as Associate Athletic Director for Football, a position held by Tim Cassidy under the previous staff. Moore served in a similar capacity for Sumlin at the University of Houston. He was a two-time All-Big 12 pitcher and two-time team captain for the Aggies while lettering from 2001-04.

Overseeing the Aggie football strength and conditioning program will be former A&M standout **Larry Jackson**, who was Houston's Director of Sports Performance and also worked with Sumlin at the University of Oklahoma. Jackson earned second-team All-Southwest Conference honors at defensive end as a senior in 1994 and worked in A&M strength and conditioning program from 1999-2004. A nationally recognized strength coach who learned under the legendary Mike Clark, Jackson faces the first and most critical test of the new staff – getting the players physically ready to play next season in the nation's premier football conference. **A**



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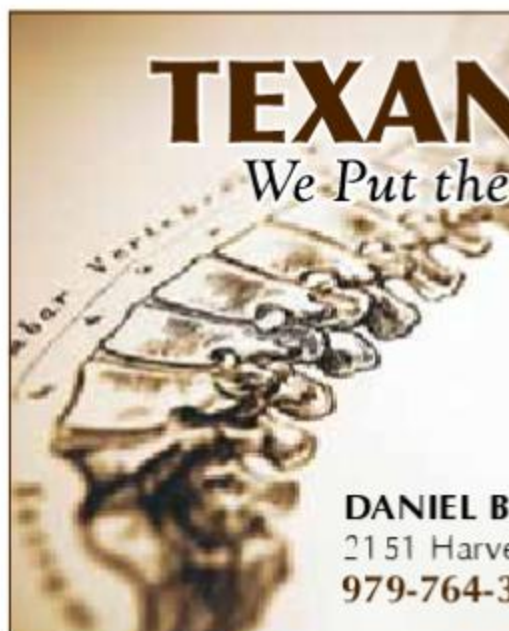
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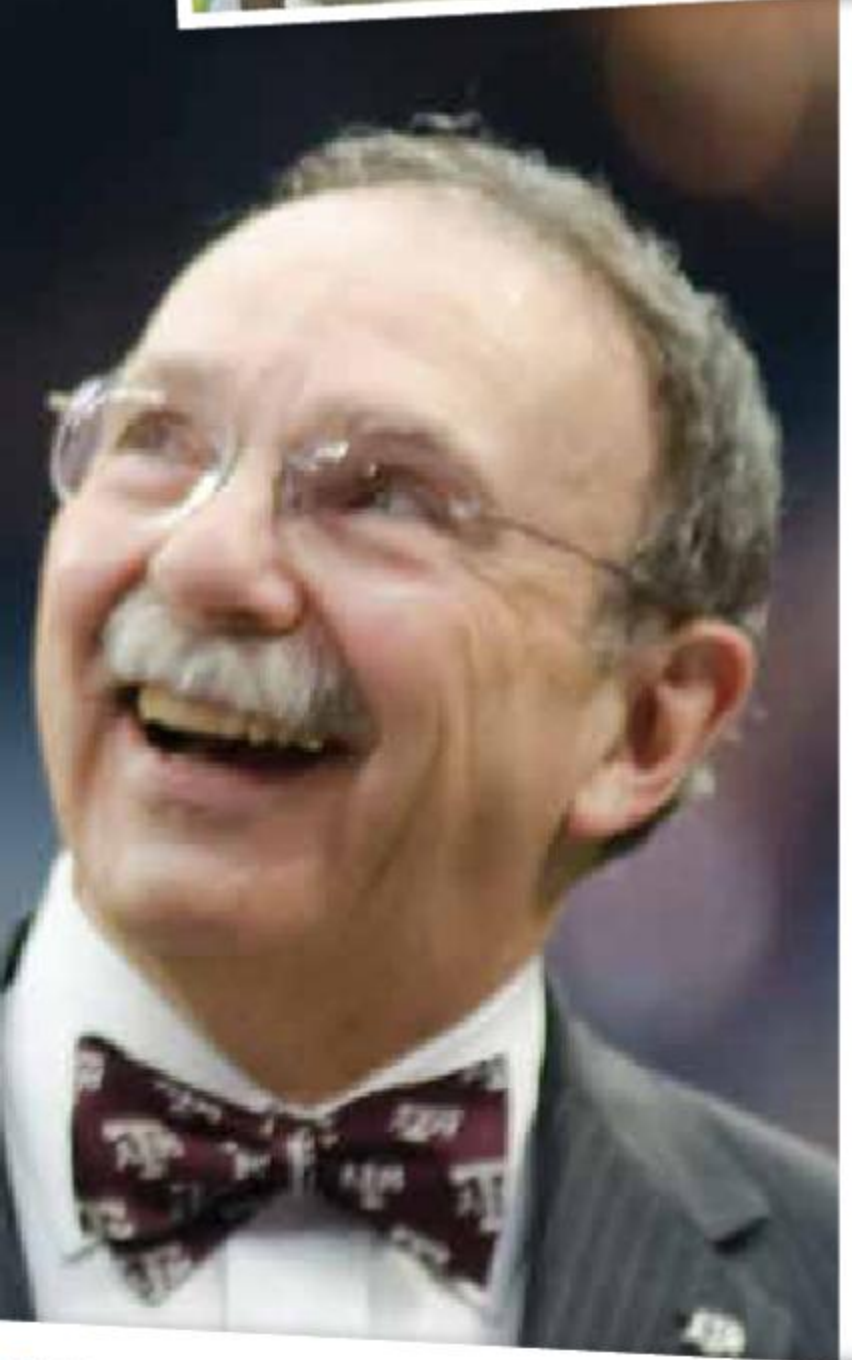
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Texas A&M senior QB Ryan Tannehill was named MVP of the 2011 Meineke Car Care Bowl after completing 27 of 40 passes for 329 yards and 1 touchdown.





22



33



While unfortunately it was not the BCS bowl game Aggies were day-dreaming about before the football season began, the 2011 Meineke Car Care Bowl provided one thing the A&M program desperately needed – a bowl victory.

Led by interim head coach Tim DeRuyter in his final game on the A&M sidelines, the Aggies defeated Northwestern, 33-22, breaking a five-game bowl losing streak. It was the first bowl victory for A&M since beating TCU, 28-9, in the 2001 Galleryfurniture.com bowl. The team dedicated the win to fired head coach Mike Sherman and offense lineman Joseph Villavisencio, who was killed in a car accident just over a week prior to the game. The Aggies closed the books on the 2011 season with a 7-6 record.

Offensive Player of the Game

Ryan Tannehill, 27-40, 329 yards, 1 TD

Defensive Players of the Game

Damontre Moore, 9 Tkls, 2 TFL, 1 FF, 1 Sack
Terrence Frederick, 5 Tkls, 3 TFL, 1 PBU, 2 Sacks

Special Teams Player of the Game

Randy Bullock, 4 FG's (24,40,47,31)

Record Setting Seniors

Ryan Tannehill set new single-season school records for yards (3,744), attempts (531) and completions (327) in 2011. He was a finalist for the Unitas Award and Campbell Trophy and semifinalist for the O'Brien Award this season. He also finished second on the school's single-season list in touchdown passes (29) and total offense (4,050). Tannehill wrapped up his career at A&M as the most accurate passer in school history, with a 62.5% completion percentage. He ranks sixth on the Aggies' all-time list in passing yards (5,450), fifth in touchdown passes (42), fifth in completions (484) and seventh in attempts (774). The Big Spring, Texas native is the only player in FBS history to post a 400-yard

passing game and 200-yard receiving game. He is also the only player in FBS history to total more than 4,000 passing yards and 1,500 receiving yards in a career.

Cyrus Gray posted his second consecutive 1,000-yard rushing season in 2011, becoming just the third player in school history to have back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons. A second team All-Big 12 selection this season, Gray rushed for 1,045 yards and 12 touchdowns and added another 239 yards receiving on 31 catches and three receiving touchdowns. A threat in the return game as well, Gray led the Aggies with 1,400 all-purpose yards this year. Gray, a native of DeSoto, Texas, is A&M's record holder in career all-purpose yardage with 6,423, which ranks 24th in NCAA FBS history. He is also the school's record holder in game (261), season (1,169) and career (2,349) kickoff return yardage. He ranks third all-time in school history with 3,298 rushing yards and scored 38 total TDs (30 rush, 6 rec., 2 KO return).

Jeff Fuller saved his best effort of the season for the Aggies' bowl game, reeling in seven passes for a season-high 119 yards and a touchdown. He caught 70 passes for 828 yards and six scores this year, earning Honorable Mention All-Big 12 honors in the process. He leaves College Station as the school's all-time leading receiver in receptions (231), yards (3,092) and receiving touchdowns (34). Fuller enjoyed his best season as an Aggie in 2010, setting school marks with 72 catches, 1,065 receiving yards and 12 receiving touchdowns. The four-year starter finished his career having caught at least one pass in every game he played (46).

Randy Bullock took home the Lou Groza Award in 2011, given annually to the nation's top place-kicker. He was a consensus first team All-America selection and second team All-Big 12 pick. He had a record-setting year for the Aggies in 2011, becoming the school's single-season leader in scoring (142), field goals (29) and extra points (55). He connected on 29 of 33 field goals this year and led the nation with 2.33 field goals per game. The Klein, Texas native is A&M's all-time career leader in field goals (63), field goal percentage (.788), scoring (365) and extra points (176). **AT**



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ELIZABETH & KAILEY

At Home with the Aggie Dance Team

Elizabeth (Liz) and Kailey spend a lot of their time studying, but when the TV is on, **Kailey hogs the remote**. "I'm the bossy one and Liz is laid back." Their favorite show is *Summer Heights High*, an Australian mockumentary series starring comedian Chris Lilley. "It's absolutely hilarious. And if things get tense on the dance team, we start talking with the accent from the show and make everyone laugh," Kailey said.



The sophomore Aggie dancers like to bake during finals. "We gain the finals 15," Kailey admits. Liz is the chef of the house. She has a collection of **cookbooks** and baking tools that her mom has given her. "My favorite thing to bake is **homemade pizza**. My margarita pizza is the best," Liz said.



While grocery shopping at Kroger, Kailey spotted a **Jesus prayer candle** and had to have it. "I thought it was funny and ridiculous, so I needed it. Best \$1.59 I ever spent!"



Kailey starts every day with at least one **cup of coffee** (one Sweet'N Low packet and half and half). "I'm a different person if I don't have it." Her favorite is Dallmayr Prodomo, a German coffee that her mom gave her. Liz has to have iced tea every day, usually from Sonic (two Sweet'N Low packets and extra ice). "The Sonic ice is a necessity."

Liz and Kailey went on a **dove hunting** trip with Kailey's dad. "He would shoot them and we would chase them down and rip their heads off. We gutted them and everything. I loved ripping their heads off," Kailey admitted.

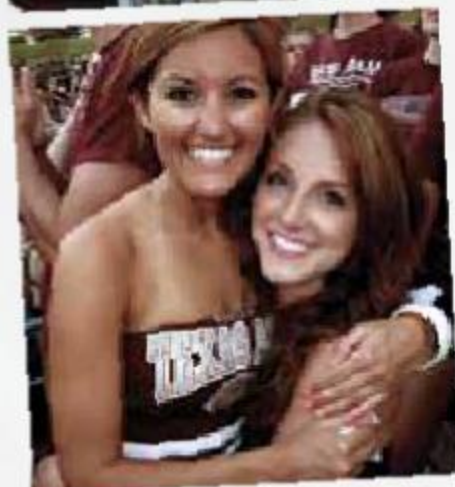




Liz's room is **decked out** with her favorite color – pink. She loves Scentsy candles, her **pink lamp** and her **piggy bank**. Liz has a **Keurig** in her room to make green tea, and a hope chest filled with keepsakes from her childhood. Growing up in the country, Liz was very active in Future Farmers of America and showed heifers. "I did it for a long time, but nobody believes me now because I don't look like I would have done that."



Both girls grew up as tomboys. Liz didn't get her ears pierced until she was 18.



Liz and Kailey met as freshmen on the Aggie Dance Team.



Kailey likes to study, watch TV and read in her bedroom. "My bed is a pain to make, but I love it. It's my princess room." She is obsessed with *Dexter*, a popular TV series about a serial killer, and enjoys reading *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Acting as her own handy man, Kailey **installed the bathroom shelf** and blinds in her room. "I'm really proud of that." Just **stay out of her closet** and the bathtub. "My bathtub is orange. The Sally tanning spray that we have to cover ourselves with for dance team **stains everything orange.**"





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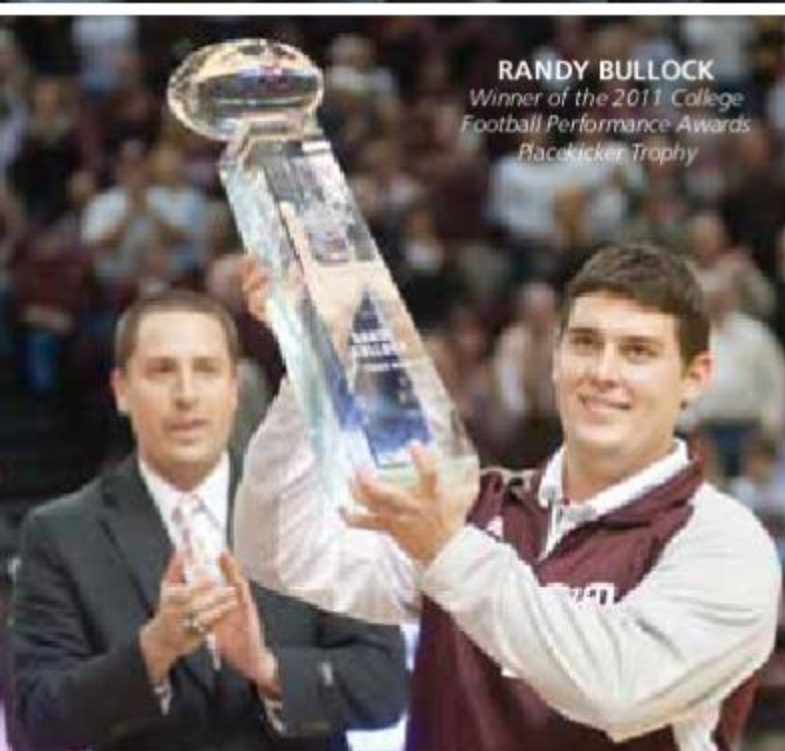
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AGGIE PISTOL & WATER POLO

BY BRIAN DAVIS '01

PISTOL

Like most Aggie traditions, the Texas A&M Pistol Team can trace its roots to the university's Corps of Cadets where students have been trained with service pistols in preparation for combat.

A member of the Texas A&M Sport Club Association, the team was formed in 1974 by Major Curtis Burns '52 following his retirement from the United States Air Force. Burns coached the team for 35 years until retiring in 2009. Current team president Matthew Morris '12 says that Burns' discipline training and commitment to excellence took A&M to multiple national competitions and shaped the way the team still functions today.

"We take great pride in the fact that we are such a diverse organization which gives men and women an opportunity to better themselves as individual shooters and members of a team that is deeply attached to our University," Morris said.

There are over 30 members on this year's team – the largest it has been in more than five years. About 60 percent have some shooting experience when they join, typically from hunting or backyard shooting. However, only about 10 percent have formal competitive shooting experience.

"As upperclassmen, it is our responsibility to train new shooters, not only in marksmanship, but in leadership," Morris said.

To be a good competitive pistol shooter, Morris says a person needs to have good front sight alignment and trigger control. However, those are just the foundation.

"Even the naturally gifted shooters must make an outside effort to improve beyond what we can do during practice," he said.

The team practices five days a week for about three hours each day alternating through four different pistol disciplines – standard, free, sport and women sport. Competing in the NRA Collegiate Shooting Program, the Aggies participate in at least five contests annually. In the fall and spring, the team hosts an open shoot for current students to try out for the team. In February, A&M hosts sectionals to determine which shooters qualify for the national competition in Fort Benning, Ga.

"During the week of spring break, the greatest collegiate-level marksmen in the country come together in Georgia to prove their skills," Morris said.

Depending on the event, the Aggies have ranked among the

top five teams in the nation for the last three years. The team has a long-standing rivalry with the Ohio State University Pistol Team – a fully funded NCAA team. In addition to the Buckeyes, A&M typically competes against Michigan Institute of Technology, the U.S. Military Academy and the U.S. Naval Academy for medals at the national matches.

The National Rifle Association presents the Curtis Burns trophy each year to the Collegiate ROTC Pistol Team Champions. Major Burns passed away at the age of 80 in January. Read his Silver Taps notification here: www.tinyurl.com/silvertaps

WOMEN'S WATER POLO

Texas A&M and the University of Texas typically dominate collegiate sports in the state of Texas, and women's water polo is no different. In fact, since 2007, the two flagship universities have combined for all five of the Women's National Collegiate Club Texas Division championships.

Founded in 1997, the Texas A&M Women's Water Polo club most recently got the best of their archrivals in the 2010 championship game and advanced to nationals at the University of Arizona. The Longhorns won the championship rematch in 2011, so the Aggies are looking for payback this year.


Last semester, the Aggies hosted one tournament and travelled to the University of Florida for their fall invitational. The club will compete in three divisional tournaments this spring – Feb. 11-12 at Texas; Apr. 14-15 at home; and Apr. 21-22 at Rice. Also on the schedule is a spring invitational tournament at the University of Arizona on Feb. 18-19.

There are currently 24 women on the Aggie roster including team president Michele Horner '12. A goalie for her high school water polo team, Horner joined the A&M club to stay active and to keep playing the sport she loves.

"The majority of our members played some kind of water polo before joining the club," Horner said, "and almost 90 percent have a swimming background."

To be a good water polo player, Horner says you must be able to swim fairly well and be willing to work together with a team, learn new skills and improve existing skills. It also takes a high level of commitment. The Aggies practice four to five days a week for two hours a day in the dive well at the Student Recreation Center.

"I love leading this great group of women," Horner said, "and I am so fortunate to have great examples of past leaders of the team to learn from."

Visit recsports.tamu.edu for more information on the Texas A&M Women's Water Polo club, and catch the Aggies in action during their home tournament on Apr. 14-15. Admission is free! 



Out with the Old

Howdy!

We are officially in a new year, a new semester and operating under a new coaching staff.

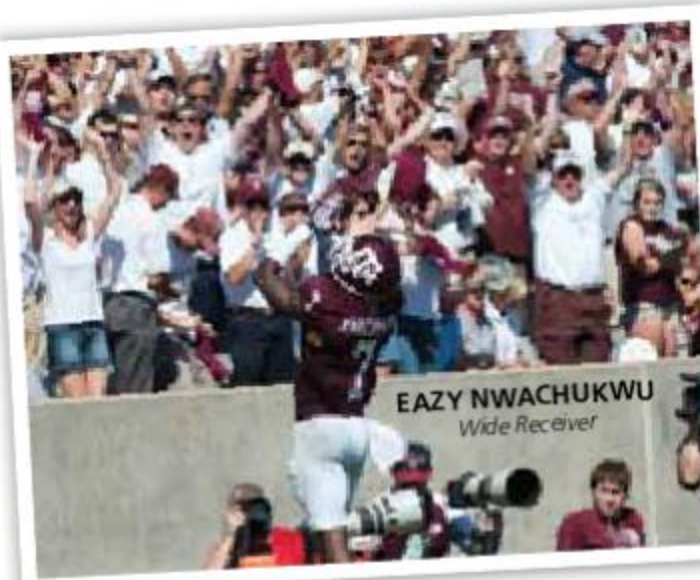
Many fans had strong opinions during the coaching search, myself included, about who should lead us into the SEC West. Everyone agreed it was going to take a special individual to prepare us for the grand stage of college football. All eyes are on Texas A&M, critics and fans alike. We're all looking to silence the nay-sayers and prove ourselves to our rivals old and new who don't think we can compete.

I have to be honest and say that with the names being thrown out in consideration for the head coach position, Kevin Sumlin was not my first choice. I was actually hoping we would choose one of the defensive-minded coaches, like Kirby Smart or Charlie Strong. So far, however, I couldn't be more impressed with Coach Sumlin and I'm happy to be wrong.

My first impression of our new coach is that he is a great fit for our program, and he has hit the ground running in regards to recruiting. I don't know what he is telling these guys, and I don't care, because it is working! Just to name a few, recruits like Matt Davis, De'Vante Harris, Thomas Johnson, Mike Matthews, Otis

the talent on campus.

In a conference overwhelmed with powerful defenses, I can't wait to see what Sumlin brings to the table offensively be-



cause I think that could be a huge advantage for A&M.

Defensively, it's no secret we will have to step our game up. The Aggies finished the 2011 season ranked 109th in pass defense out of 120 teams. Fortunately, our new co-defensive coordinators Mark Snyder and Marcel Yates seem to be the guys to give our defense the makeover it needs, especially with Yates being a secondary specialist from a Boise State program that knows how to win.

I got the chance to ask upcoming senior wide receiver Uzoma Nwachukwu, AKA Eazy, a few questions about all the changes in our football program:

How is the team adjusting to the new coaching staff?

Everybody is adjusting really well. The coaches seem really cool, and the guys have done a great job of buying into the system as well as the coaches giving us space to adapt to change. So things are running pretty smooth.

What are you most looking forward to in the new offense?

I'm looking forward to the challenge of stepping into a bigger role in our offense. With Jeff [Fuller] leaving, somebody in our receiver group has to step into that role and contribute more, and I'm putting that pressure on myself. The offense looks like heaven for a receiver, so

I'm looking forward to enjoying it with guys like Ryan Swope, Kenric McNeal and Brandal Jackson.

What do you think will be the biggest change fans will see next season from the team?

I think fans are going to get to see a lot more energy and excitement on the field. Especially this group of seniors, as we realize it's our last go around. We want to make sure we go out the right way and make a big splash in the SEC.

ON CAMPUS

"Aggieland Idol" was hosted as an event for fans of any age to audition for a chance to perform the National Anthem at any one of 40 home Aggie baseball games! Expect to see a number of those selected when you visit the brand new Blue Bell Park complex. The stadium finally seems



to be coming together, and I can't wait to see it. I've heard the new suite boxes are pretty snazzy. Aggie baseball is 6th in preseason rankings, so it looks like we have a fun season ahead of us.

Thank you readers for tuning in. You can always give me feedback on our Facebook and Twitter pages. I would love to hear from you! Be sure that you are following @aggiemag, as we typically have lots of ticket giveaways in the spring! Until next time...!

- Macy



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